

## **The Vale of Glamorgan Council**

### **Cabinet Meeting: 23 May, 2016**

#### **Report of the Leader**

### **External Funding: Coastal Access Improvement Grant 2016-17, Rights of Way Improvement Grant 2015/16**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform Cabinet of two external funding grant applications, to note the use of the managing Director's emergency powers and to seek approval for the work being undertaken and acceptance of the grant and associated conditions.

#### **Recommendations**

1. That Cabinet notes the use of the Managing Director's emergency powers to approve acceptance of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan Grant 2016-17 and the proposed use of the funding
2. That Cabinet accepts the Coastal Access Improvement Grant 2016-17 and the grant terms and conditions.
3. That subject to Welsh Government approval, Cabinet authorises the inclusion of both the £31,136 Rights of Way Improvement Grant and £132,730 Coastal Access Improvement Grant and £6,410 match funding into the Capital Programme.

#### **Reasons for the Recommendations**

1. Due to the urgency involved in accepting the Rights of Way Improvement Grant 2016-17, the use of emergency powers was required to accept funding in order for the Rights of Way Improvement Plan to continue to be delivered.
2. To allow grant funding to be accepted in order to deliver the Coastal Access Improvement Programme.

3. To include both grants within the Capital Programme.

## **Background**

2. The Coastal Access Improvement Programme (CAIP) is a scheme funded by the Welsh Government to deliver its commitment to increase public access to the coast of Wales for visitors and local people. The programme is managed by Natural Resources Wales with the development and delivery of local improvement programmes led by Local Authorities. This is the second year of the five year funding period that was announced in 2015. Indicative funding levels have been issued in respect of offers for 2016-17.
3. The Vale of Glamorgan Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) was adopted in November 2007. Each year the Welsh Government, through Natural Resources Wales provide a grant scheme to support the delivery of the implementation of the actions and improvements as detailed by the ROWIP. The Council has been given indicative funding, but is required to identify the expected spend programme. The ROWIP comprises of a number of programme actions that aim to assist in the delivery of Rights of Way Objectives as set out by Natural Resources Wales.
4. The deadline for acceptance of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan Grant was the 1st April 2016; therefore emergency powers were used in order to accept funding to continue to deliver the Rights of Way Improvement Plan in accordance with the Council's statutory duties.

## **Relevant Issues and Options**

5. The total funding sought for the CAIP grant is £132,730, and an additional £6,410 is sought in revenue match funding. The programme is comprised of two parts. Improvement projects have been identified to Natural Resources Wales and have been approved in principle at 100% grant rate, this allocation amounts to £113,500. In addition, an allocation for coastal path maintenance at 75% grant rate has been advised. In the Vale for 2016-17 this amounts to £19,230 of grant to be matched by £6,410. It is anticipated that this will be issued each year over the life of the programme.
6. The total Capital funding sought for the ROWIP is £31,136. The project comprises a number of programme actions aiming to assist in the delivery of ROWIP objectives. Four actions have been proposed for this year these include: the dedication of rights at Summerhouse, £15,000; the adoption of path coordination works, £6050; the regularisation of definitive map anomalies and resolution of long standing issues by order, £7,500; and 30 kilometres of vegetation clearance, £2,586.

## **Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)**

7. The Council is obliged to maintain a Rights of Way network and these grants assist in performing this duty. In respect of Tourism and Rural Regeneration this is a valuable opportunity to improve the Vale's 'offer' and the scheme will benefit from the marketing of the Wales Coastal Path.

## **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

8. Improvements to the Vale of Glamorgan's Coastal Path will decisively benefit local communities through improved recreational and tourism opportunities. The formalisation of non-existent, or informal links, will further benefit both local

communities and visitors. Through improvements, many sections of the Coastal Path will be accessible to young families and those with mobility problems.

9. Improvements to the Rights of Way network will benefit local communities directly through the provision of alternative links between settlements and indirectly through improved tourism opportunities.

### **Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)**

10. On grant funding being approved or secured the Council will enter into appropriate terms and conditions with the relevant funding body.
11. The resolution of anomalies identified during drafting of the recently published Definitive Map and Statement will assist in maintaining legal records that are accurate to the experiences of users and landowners on the ground and remove the need for unnecessary complications during conveyancing or by other legal procedures.

### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

12. There are no crime and disorder implications arising as a direct result of the Coastal Access Improvement Grant.

### **Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)**

13. Both projects will work to improve coastal access in the Vale of Glamorgan for all residents and visitors. Specifically improvements to sections of Coastal Path will enhance accessibility for young families and those with issues with mobility.

### **Corporate/Service Objectives**

14. The CAIP and ROWIP will both work to support Well-being Objective 3 and 7 of the Corporate Plan 2016-2020; Promoting regeneration, Economic growth and Employment, and Encouraging and Promoting Active and Healthy Lifestyles. The funding will further support Priority Outcomes 3 and 10 of the Community Strategy, Working to Respect the Local Environment and Meet Challenge of Climate Change While Providing Greater Opportunities for People to Engage in Physical Activities, including walking and outdoor recreation. In addition, funding will decisively contribute to delivery against Improvement Objective 4, Encouraging and promoting active and healthy lifestyles.

### **Policy Framework and Budget**

15. This is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet.

### **Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)**

16. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education has been consulted on the Coastal Access Improvement Grant and Rights of Way Improvement Plan Grant.

### **Relevant Scrutiny Committee**

17. Corporate Performance and Resources

## **Background Papers**

### **Contact Officer**

Huw Isaac, Head of Performance and Development

### **Officers Consulted**

External Funding Steering Group  
Corporate Management Team  
Operational Manager - Legal Services  
Gwyn Teague, Public Rights of Way Officer

### **Responsible Officer:**

Huw Isaac, Head of Performance and Development